

NNNNVV ESA556MJC091

PP RUQMR

DE RUS2LK 07256/1 0741115

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P R 011252Z OCT 79

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5842

INFO RUHJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0782

RUSBGD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9385

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1954

RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7473

RUQMR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 0527

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 7256

EXDIS

E.O. 12865: GDS 12/1/85 (AMSTUTZ, J. BRUCE) OR-W

TAGS: PEPR, AF, UR

SUBJ: INDICATIONS THAT DRA SEEKS BETTER RELATIONS WITH USG:
A COMMENTARY

REF: (A) KABUL 7204, (B) KABUL 7232

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY. DURING THE LAST SEVEN DAYS, WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING CLEAR SIGNALS THAT THE DRA SEEKS BETTER RELATIONS WITH US. I THINK IT IMPORTANT THAT THESE BE APPRECIATED, BUT I ALSO BELIEVE IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL WHETHER THESE SIGNS WILL BE SUBSTANTIATED IN AREAS IMPORTANT TO US. WHEN LAST WEEK I MET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST ON THE EMBASSY STAFF REDUCTION ISSUE, HE GAVE NO INDICATION THAT AN IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS APPLIED TO THAT MATTER. FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT IN THE SENSITIVE AREA OF AMERICAN EXPERTS COMING TO AFGHANISTAN, THE INFORMATION AND CULTURAL MINISTRY HAS JUST CANCELLED ITS RECENT REQUEST TO THE ASIA FOUNDATION FOR AN AMERICAN SHORT-TERM CONSULTANT. HOPEFULLY, WHEN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST CALLS ME IN TO DISCUSS FURTHER THE EMBASSY REDUCTION ISSUE, WE WILL HAVE A BETTER NOTION WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN IN FACT A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN DRA POLICY. END SUMMARY.

3. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT BEFORE TO THE DEPARTMENT, THE DRA HAS HERETOFORE BEEN CONDUCTION ITS POLICY TOWARDS US ON TWO PLANES. ON ONE LEVEL, THEY REPEATEDLY INFORM US THAT THE DRA WANTS BETTER RELATIONS AND THAT THEY CONSIDER THE PRESENT SITUATION "UNNATURAL." FURTHER, ON THIS PLANE, THEY DO SUCH THINGS AS SEND AN UNUSUALLY LARGE NUMBER OF MINISTERS (3) TO OUR JULY 4 RECEPTION, AND MOST RECENTLY PRESIDENT/PRIME MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN RECEIVED ME WARMLY AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. ON THE OTHER HAND, ON ANOTHER LEVEL, IN AREAS MORE IMPORTANT TO US, SUCH AS INVESTIGATING AMBASSADOR DUBS' DEATH, AND CARRYING OUT OUR PEACE CORPS, USAID AND USICA PROGRAMS, WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED MANY ROADBLOCKS. ADDITIONALLY, THE GOVERNMENT HAS OVER THE LAST TWO MONTHS BOUGHT A REDUCTION IN THE SIZE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY. IN MY VIEW, NOW WE FINALLY COME OUT ON THIS LAST ISSUE WILL BE THE REAL TEST OF THEIR TRUE INTENTIONS TOWARDS US.

4. THE HEARTENING SIGNS THEY HAVE SENT US THIS LAST WEEK ARE THE FOLLOWING:

-- AFTER FIRST REFUSING TO ALLOW ICA WASHINGTON VISITOR MARILYN MCAFEE TO MAKE CALLS ON VARIOUS DRA OFFICIALS, THIS ACTION WAS RESCINDED AND ALL THE REQUESTED CALLS WERE PERMITTED, INCLUDING ONE ON INFORMATION AND CULTURAL MINISTER KATAWAZI.

-- DURING THE CALL ON MINISTER KATAWAZI (PEF B), THE MINISTER WAS CORDIAL AND MADE AN APPEAL FOR MORE COOPERATION IN THE CULTURAL AND INFORMATION AREA. HIS POSTURE IN THIS RESPECT WAS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF A COUPLE MONTHS AGO.

-- MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHEN ICA VISITOR MCAFEE CALLED THE NEXT DAY ON THE FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR FOR INFORMATION, ASEEMULLAH MATIN, THE DIRECTOR MADE A POINT OF DECLARING THAT THE DRA WANTED BETTER RELATIONS (PEF A).

-- LAST WEEK ON THE INFORMATION AND CULTURAL MINISTRY REPEALED ITS ORDER, OF A MONTH AGO, OF WITHDRAWING THE 38-ODD MINISTRY OFFICIALS STUDYING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT THE AMERICAN CENTER.

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RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7474
RUGMHR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 8524
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 7258

EXD15

-- A FEW DAYS AFTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN BECAME PRESIDENT, THE AMERICAN CENTER LIBRARIAN REPORTED THAT TWO SETS OF OFFICIALS AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS DEGAURED THAT IT WAS NOW "ALL RIGHT" FOR THEM TO PATRONIZE THE LIBRARY.

-- PRESIDENT PRIME MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN RECEIVED ME EARLY ON SEPT 27, DURING WHICH MEETING HE MADE ANOTHER APPEAL FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS. THAT MEETING WAS PUBLICIZED IN THE LOCAL PRESS, INCLUDING A PHOTOGRAPH (AS WERE ALSO PUBLICIZED THE CALLS OF OTHER CHIEFS OF MISSION).

-- ON THE SAME DAY IN NEW YORK CITY, FOREIGN MINISTER SHAH VALI EXPRESSED SENTIMENTS FOR BETTER RELATIONS TO UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS. THE FACE OF SUCH A MEETING WAS GIVEN PROMINENT LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE.

5. WHILE THE ABOVE ARE CLEARLY ENCOURAGING SIGNS, THERE ARE OTHER SIGNALS WHICH WOULD SUGGEST NO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE IN POLICY. THESE ARE:

-- FOREIGN MINISTER DOST'S COOL RESPONSE DURING MY MEETING WITH HIM ON SEPT 25 ON THE EMBASSY STAFF REDUCTION ISSUE.

-- CONTINUED IF NOT INCREASING PRESSURE ON OUR EMBASSY FSN'S OBSTINATE AFGHAN SECRET POLICE (KAM), INCLUDING THE PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THIS OF DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AND KAM CHIEF, ASSADULLAH AMIN, THE PRESIDENT'S NEPHEW AND SON-IN-LAW. (OUR COS CAUTIONS AGAINST READING TOO MUCH INTO THIS, BELIEVING THAT SUCH PENETRATION EFFORTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE WITHOUT LET UP, REGARDLESS OF THE TEMPERATURE OF OUR RELATIONS.)

-- IN AN ACTION PROBABLY RELATED TO THE EMBASSY STAFF REDUCTION ISSUE, THE MFA CONTINUES TO LOUSE TO GIVE DRIVERS LICENSES TO ANY OF OUR NEW PEOPLE.

-- THE ASIA FOUNDATION -IT JUST BEEN INFORMED THAT THE INFORMATION MINISTRY WAS CANCELLED ITS REQUEST FOR A SHORT-TERM AMERICAN CONSULTANT TO HELP THEM ORGANIZE THE MINISTRY'S ARCHIVES.

6. CONCLUSION. THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING OF THE DRA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS US WILL BE HOW THEY RESPOND ON THE EMBASSY STAFFING ISSUE. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST SHOULD BE SUMMONING ME TO SEE HIM ON THIS ANY DAY -24. LET'S HOPE WE HAS GOOD NEWS FOR US. ANSYLTZ

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